Planning for Major Theater Wars: The Worst Case

Major Gregory A. Pickell, US Army

PERHAPS THE SINGLE MOST important duty of US military leaders involves determining the military force required to safeguard the nation and its vital interests. The end of the Cold War has complicated the calculations of national defensive requirements. How, then, does one go about such a process? The answer is at once simple in theory, and exceedingly complex in practice. Since the beginning of the modern era, nations have based defense requirements upon the capabilities of their most likely adversary or adversaries. The United States designed and built a force capable of dealing with the Soviet Union, adhering to this time-honored and inherently valid formula. Unfortunately, the fall of the Soviet Union has eliminated the relatively static requirements upon which US defense capabilities were based. Forecasting military requirements will likely never be as simple again.

Now the United States conducts adversary-based calculus based on Major Theater Wars (MTWs). During the latter stages of the Cold War, the United States planned to fight 1 1/2 wars, meaning a large war versus the Soviets in Central Europe and a secondary regional conflict somewhere else.[1] With the end of the Cold War, the emphasis shifted exclusively to "regional conflicts," or Major Regional Contingencies (MRCs).[2] What planners now call Major Theater War (MTW) lies at the heart of the controversy surrounding US military requirements. The debate has centered on the required capability to fight and win one or two of these conflicts; whether the ability to win multiple MTWs should be simultaneous; and whether the capability to execute "contingency operations" should be added to the MTW requirement.[3]

The central difference between the current debate and the Cold War calculus is the precise delineation of the enemy. Whereas the Soviet Union and its satellites provided a clearly identifiable and largely static capability requirement, the rise of the MTW-based strategy has thrown this aspect of the debate into turmoil. Given that the definition of MTW drives major force structure and resource calculations, the continual resolution of this detail is crucial.

Two factors—technology and force structure—have combined to cloud the precise definition of an MTW, so much so that the issue has become a debate within a debate in many ways. Ironically, both of these factors stem from one event. The crushing victory over the Iraqis in Operation *Desert Storm* provides the contextual framework within which the MTW requirements debate rages. On one side are the technologists, who believe that the success enjoyed by high-tech weapon systems during the war will significantly reduce the requirement for conventional combat forces in future MTWs. On the other hand, military force structure advocates use the force structure during *Desert Storm* as a benchmark against which future MTW requirements can be measured.

The* Desert Storm *scenario represents the war that, given a choice, our military would prefer to fight. . . . Unfortunately,* Desert Storm *represents the "best case," not the "most likely case" and, most important, is at the far end of the spectrum from the "worse case."

The great irony is that both sides have missed the appropriate focus in such a debate: the enemy. A valid discussion of military requirements must first focus upon likely opponents in future MTWs. Once completed, the identification of likely opponents must be closely followed by an analysis of the risk posed to US interests generally or military assets in particular by these opponents. Significantly, while both Iraq and North Korea show up as MTW candidates and both MTWs affect US strategic interests, the Iraqi MTW poses little immediate threat to US

military assets, while the threat on the Korean peninsula is immediate and undeniable. Clouding the issue by naming different "most likely" and "worst case" scenarios is not necessary. The risk posed to US troops in South Korea transforms the Korean MTW into a scenario that, while not necessarily the most likely MTW of the next 10 years, can certainly lay claim to "worst case." A failure by US military planners to orient on an MTW that is both entirely possible and the most damaging should it occur makes a repeat of the Korean War's darkest days not only possible but a near certainty should North Korea attempt to unite the peninsula by force.

Given Korea's standing as a potential worst case scenario, US military leaders' continued reference to MTWs in terms of "*Desert Storm* Equivalents" is striking. Although there are several reasons for this, it boils down to a central rationale—the *Desert Storm* scenario represents the war that, given a choice, our military would prefer to fight. *Desert Storm* was near perfect as wars go—a compliant enemy, ideal geography and climatic conditions, and a host of allies willing to pitch in under US leadership. Unfortunately, *Desert Storm* represents the "best case," not the "most likely case" and, most important, is at the far end of the spectrum from the "worse case." Korea is the military's nightmare, and with good reason—the United States is unprepared to engage in a Korean MTW, and the reasons are as numerous as those that account for US success in *Desert Storm*.

Defining Success

Whether the benchmark MTW is correct or not, the next crucial issue in the requirements debate is defining success for the chosen scenario—another reason why DOD planners favor *Desert Storm*. US military leaders defined success in *Desert Storm* planning as ejecting the Iraqi forces from Kuwait and restoring its legitimate govermnent.[4] This simple definition, coupled with the success enjoyed in its fulfillment, has since provided US military leaders with a relatively clear framework for MTW success criteria.

Other less obvious reasons make the Gulf War attractive to US military planners. The *Desert Storm* data used to develop future requirements is empirical rather than theoretical, and also easily integrates with the most important issue of all: technology validation. *Desert Storm* validated nearly every major US weapon technology. Technology lies at the heart of the current US approach to war and validating the years of research and investment underlies much of the MTW requirements process. No other potential MTW provides the validation potential that makes *Desert Storm* so attractive to US military planners.

Clearly, however, *Desert Storm* validation data and success criteria improperly drive requirements for a significantly different MTW, especially a Korean contingency. In this case, using *Desert Storm* data and criteria ignores unfavorable conditions that make it the worst case scenario.

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US failures during a Korean MTW would have numerous sources. This is not to say, however, that the United States would suffer decisive defeat on the battlefield; US dominance in strategic air power and other technologies would eventually so devastate North Korea that peace on relatively advantageous terms would be likely. Like the Tet offensive of the Vietnam War, however, the calculus weighing victory or defeat in a Korean MTW will encompass far more than possessing the battlefield as the guns fall silent. In Tet the decisive factor was not the military defeat of the Vietcong, but US domestic opinion. Likewise, in Korea it would not be the possession of the battered hills adjoining the 38th parallel. Instead, the deciding element would likely be the casualty list, and, not surprisingly, we have *Desert Storm* to thank for a benchmark that even military novices recognize as unlikely to be seen again.[5] Nonetheless, the media and the public would inevitably draw such comparisons.

In the event of a conflict with North Korea, the public would focus overwhelmingly on one unit's performance; the 2d Infantry Division (2ID). As the sole US ground combat formation in Korea, 2ID's casualties during the first days of this conflict would be the public's key barometer of the Army's performance. Casualties may seem at first to be an unfair indicator. Public opinion is rarely concerned with fairness, however, and the casualty measure is legitimate insofar as it reflects combat effectiveness in many ways. As a result, this indicator is vital because all of the factors examined in this study play

a role in 2ID's effectiveness. Simply put, 2ID is a product of its less-than-ideal military environment.

Overall public assessment of a Korean MTW based on casualties should not be confused with public support for US involvement in the opening days of such a contingency, which is a fundamental part of American military heritage. Such support has been consistent in situations as varied as *Desert Storm*, Somalia and even early Vietnam. One can confidently assume that US support for 2ID troops would likewise be strong during the initial phase of a Korean MTW. Later, public assessment of military performance would be considerably more equivocal, with potentially profound consequences for a military that depends upon public support. The United States would likely prevail in military confrontation in Korea, but the cost in American lives would result in crippling political and military fallout once the guns fall silent.

Cold Starts, Tripwires and Rational Actors

Before the Korean scenario can be effectively studied, three key assumptions demand examination:

- US forces will be given minimal warning time to prepare for a North Korean attack.
- US Forces in Korea represent a "tripwire" designed to force US participation in the defense of the Korean peninsula.
- The North Korean government is a largely rational actor.

One of the key elements that makes the Korean MTW a worst-case scenario is the limited warning of a North Korean attack. This "cold start" assumption simply extrapolates from the Korean army's nearly constant state of readiness to invade the South. North Korean forces have been reported in a state of war readiness almost continuously in past years.[6] Reports noting NKPA exercises at a level of intensity not seen in recent times clearly illustrate the problem facing US Forces in Korea.[7] Given elevated readiness of the NKPA, US forces can only guess at which NKPA moves are feints and which are legitimate precursors to an invasion. US planners must assume that reaction time to a NKPA buildup and attack will be less than ideal even if we calculate correctly. Therefore, any responsible study must approach a Korean MTW from the perspective of a cold start.

Given the relative size of the of US ground contingent in Korea, it is difficult to avoid the assumption that 2ID and its attachments constitute a tripwire defense in the 1960s' NATO meaning. Two key ideas combine to invalidate this understanding. First, no strategic policy document currently available suggests that USFK constitutes a tripwire defense. Second, US planning fully integrates the US forces in Korea with our South Korean allies in what is hoped would be an immediately successful defense against a North Korean invasion. This political and strategic assumption of a successful defense ties in with an increasing belief in and out of military circles—that the United States must seize the initiative at the outset of a struggle and never relinquish it.

In discussions involving a North Korean attack across the 38th Parallel the most common objection raised is motive. Many experts argue that the likely outcome of such an attack would be disastrous militarily and politically for the North Koreans. While the military outcome would likely be defeat for the NKPA, the conclusion that the NKPA would therefore not attack is an exceedingly dangerous assumption. If published reports are any indicator, the North Korean government ranks among the most irrational in the world today.[8] While it is possible to point to the relative peace that has prevailed since 1953 as evidence of North Korean rationality, the North Korean leadership that presided over this peace has recently transitioned, leaving the rationality issue very much open to question. Military planning based on a belief in rational-actor theory represents an acceptable way of doing business only when one's opponent is clearly rational, and the North Korean government largely fails this test.

Assessing the Contributors to Success

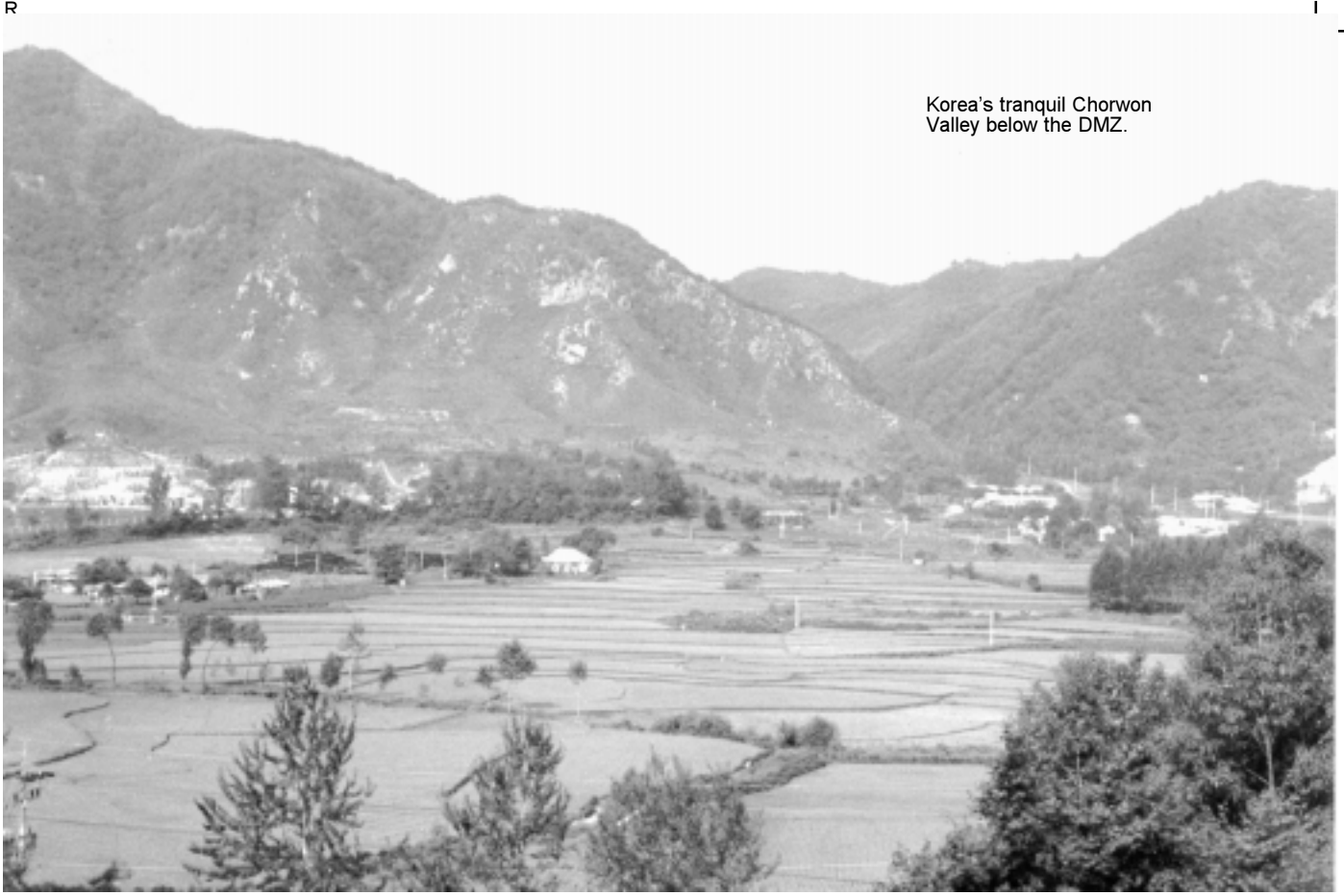
Miscalculations in significant areas could contribute to ineffective US military performance should the North Koreans attempt to unite the peninsula by force.

- Defensive Tactical Doctrine.
- Weapon Systems Technology.
- Air Power.
- Forward Basing.
- Information Warfare.
- Training and Doctrine Development.
- Unit Cohesion.

US dominance in these areas contributed to success in *Desert Storm*. However, this article demonstrates that factors contributing to success in the best-case scenario may be of marginal or insignificant value in a Korean contingency.

In some cases using prior US experience on the Korean peninsula serves as a meaningful benchmark in evaluating the military capability to deal with the North Korea threat. A comparative analysis of this type can be very illuminating and where such comparisons are not relevant, the factors will be evaluated against the current and future threat scenarios to achieve an effective comparison.

US Army



Korea's tranquil Chorwon Valley below the DMZ.

The 2ID AOR sets astride the three primary invasion corridors from the border to Seoul. Consequently, the division's ability to meet and delay or defeat a North Korean advance will be critical to success in the first days of any Korean MTW. . . . Despite these improvements, 2ID will likely not perform well at the tactical level.

US Defensive Tactical Doctrine in Focus—The 2nd Infantry Division. The course of any Korean MTW would hinge largely upon 2ID's performance in adversity. The 2ID Area of Operation (AOR) sets astride the three primary invasion corridors from the border to Seoul. Consequently, the division's ability to meet and delay or defeat a North Korean advance will be critical to success in the first days of any Korean MTW. It is fortunate, then, that the US presence is much more than meets the eye. In addition to the division's six maneuver battalions, USFK boasts a Military Police brigade, a Combat Aviation brigade, engineers and communication units, numerous support assets and other enhancements.[9] In terms of material and manpower, the US posture in Korea is immeasurably more robust than the US posture prior to hostilities in 1950.[10]

Despite these improvements, 2ID will likely not perform well at the tactical level. The reasons for this are manifold, and they include flawed defensive tactical doctrine and inappropriate weapon system technologies, both overshadowed by a refusal to recognize the unpleasant differences between the Gulf War and a Korean MTW.[11]

Parameters	*Desert Storm*	Korea
Type of Operations	Offensive, Mechanized Opns	Defensive, Light Infantry-Based Opns
Operating Environment	Open, Flat Terrain	Mountainous, Restricted Terrain
Engagement Distance	4000 Meters (+)	300-500 Meters(-)
US Force Mix	80% Armor—20%Light	60% Armor—40%Light
Enemy Force Mix	70% Armor—30%Light	20% Armor—80%Light

Figure 1. *Desert Storm* versus Korean MTW

Despite these differences between a *Desert Storm* MTW and a Korean MTW, however, the Army seems poised to fight the Korean MTW using tactics and equipment tailored to the *Desert Storm* scenario rather than the Korean MTW. The result cannot be reassuring.

Perhaps the greatest doctrinal disconnect regards US tactical defensive doctrine, which requires defense in depth coupled with a symmetric battlefield approach. If the NKPA makes its long-awaited move south toward Seoul, it will choose one of the three primary avenues of approach noted earlier. Unfortunately for the defenders, the NKPA would not meet a united 2ID in the chosen corridor. Instead, they would confront approximately 20-30 percent of the division's combat power along any one route, the other 60-80 percent distributed along the other two avenues of approach.[12] In addition, the portion of 2ID in the key corridor would then be further diluted by the distribution of its combat assets along the length of this avenue as 2ID develops what is seen as defense in depth as illustrated above. The odds in this flawed defensive arrangement greatly favor the attacker at every point of contact.[13] Further, this imbalance would not be addressed through the rapid movement of reserves from the less threatened corridors to the point of maximum danger. US defensive doctrine emphasizes mobility among assets such as artillery and attack helicopters.[14] This doctrinal methodology threatens defeat along the primary invasion corridor while the other two-thirds of the division's combat power is rapidly outflanked and forced to withdraw.

One of the key elements that makes the Korean MTW a worst-case scenario is the limited warning of a North Korean attack. . . . Given elevated readiness of the NKPA, US forces can only guess at which NKPA moves are feints and which are legitimate precursors to an invasion.

If the division were to save its armored and mechanized assets for a mobile counterattack, it would be even more vulnerable. In theory the division is more suited to this role; 60 percent of its assets are heavy formations designed with mobility and shock effect in mind. Unfortunately, these units would begin hostilities in assembly areas within range of NKPA artillery.[15] The NKPA ability to target easily divined US assembly areas for counterattack forces with thousands of artillery pieces and multiple rocket launchers would almost certainly cause catastrophic losses within the first hours of an attack. Ironically, units dug in along the DMZ, stand a significantly better change of survival in the event of a North Korean attack.

Weapon System Technologies. A second contributor to this inadequate tactical performance concerns tactically inappropriate weapon system technologies and their employment by 2ID. *Desert Storm* validated a variety of US weapon systems, some of which are dangerously inappropriate in a Korean MTW. While many weapon systems possess versatility that translates to effective performance in Korea, other critical technologies do not. An example of this inappropriateness is the premier US antitank weapon, the TOW II antitank missile system, which performed well in *Desert Storm*, achieving kills in excess of 4,000 meters. Unfortunately, there are few, if any, 4,000 engagement ranges in Korea, and the TOW II would be dangerously ineffective in this radically different environment.[16] The anticipated fielding of the Line of Sight Anti-Tank Weapon (LOSAT), with a l0-kilometer (km) engagement range, provides additional evidence of systems optimized for Desert Storm and entirely inappropriate in a Korean MTW.[17]

Tactical Air Power in Korea. One hallmark of the extremely successful Gulf War campaign was the dominant role played by US air power. The ability to target and significantly degrade the tactical combat capabilities of the Iraqi ground forces led to claims in some circles that Air Force battlefield dominance will be the decisive issue in any future campaign.[18] Indeed, close air support (CAS) in particular provides a potentially decisive differentiation between the ineffective Air Force role in the early stages of the Korean War and air power's role in a future rematch. While US Air Force and Navy aircraft effectively interdicted North Korean communications and supplies in 1950, Air Force and Navy CAS in the early stages of the Korean conflict was not effective. During the first days of the conflict, coordination between Air Force and Navy aircraft and ground personnel was extremely poor, and many fratricide incidents were reported.[19] Despite these problems both Air Force and Navy aircraft vigorously executed CAS, though their effectiveness was clearly open to debate.[20]

Current US CAS coordination is a far cry from the early days of Korea. Air-ground coordination, developed during the Vietnam War and further refined during *Desert Storm*, has largely eliminated the fratricide issue, and ground-attack aircraft such as the A-10 have added a tremendous punch to the air support arsenal. Clearly, the development of this instrument of modem combat can provide defending US forces in Korea a combat multiplier unavailable to the members of the 24th Infantry Division

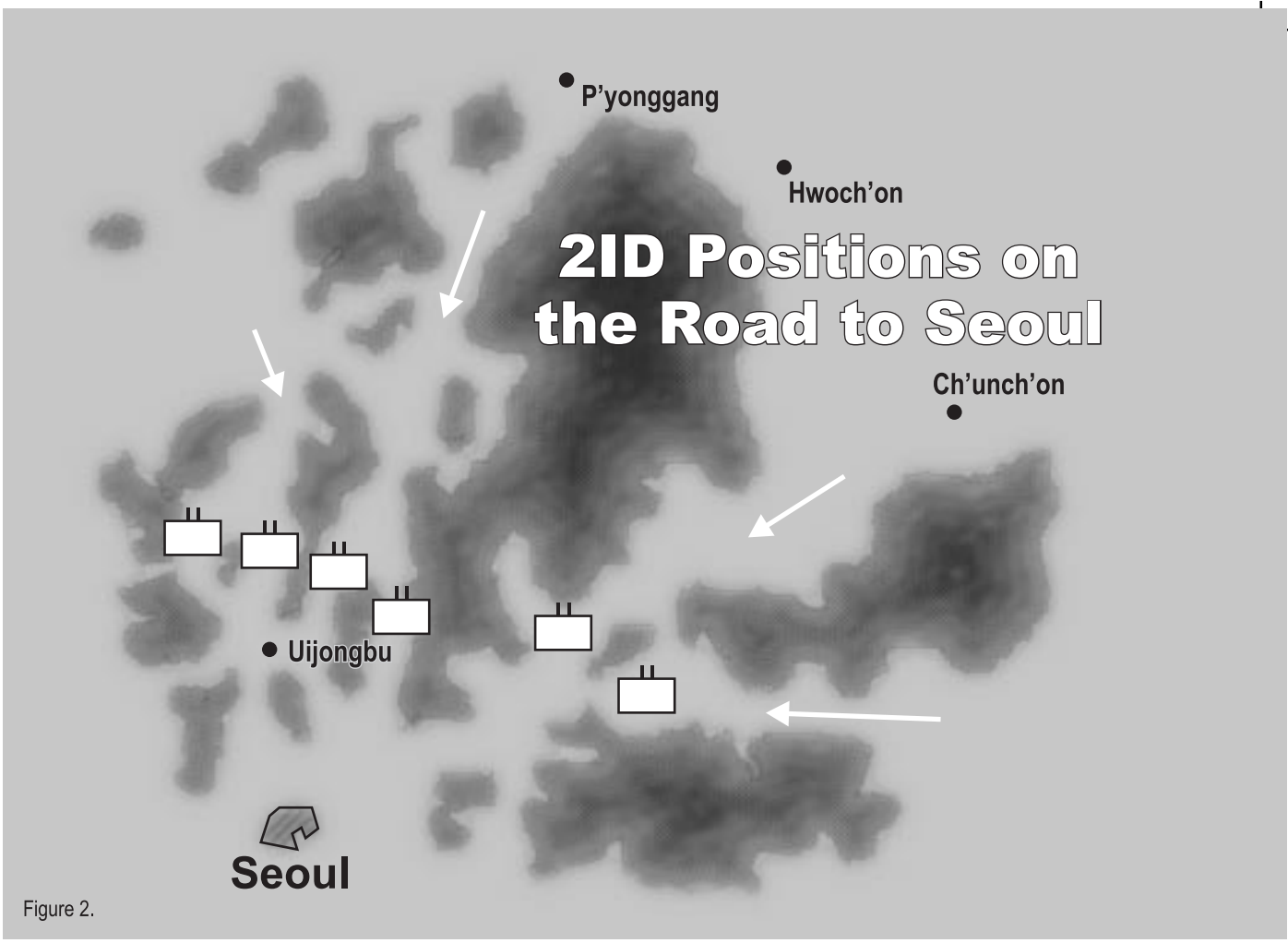


Figure 2.

Perhaps the greatest doctrinal disconnect regards US tactical defensive doctrine, which requires defense in depth coupled with a symmetric battlefield approach. If the NKPA makes its long-awaited move south toward Seoul, it would not meet a united 2ID in the chosen corridor. Instead, they would confront approximately 20-30 percent of the division's combat power along any one route. . . . Moreover, the division would receive very little CAS during the opening hours and days of a Korean conflict.

in July 1950. Most important, US Army defensive tactical doctrine depends heavily on assets such as CAS, and this support is rightly seen as vital to 2ID's survival.[21]

Given the criticality of CAS to 2ID's mission, it is unfortunate that the division would receive very little CAS during the opening hours and days of a Korean conflict. Several factors explain this seeming contradiction. First, as Edward Luttwak has argued, North Korea, with over 18,000 air defense weapons, presents an environment too lethal for US aircraft.[22] DOD doctrine lends credence to this line of reasoning, noting that suppression of enemy air defense and air superiority must be achieved before CAS can be executed: still, suppressing 18,000 NPKA weapons would be a time-consuming and perhaps impossible task.[23] Finally, if one assumes that the US Air Force and Navy aircraft have been allotted the air superiority and battlefield air interdiction (BAI) missions, the CAS assignment falls by default to the South Korean air force.[24] Since most South Korean aircraft are largely unsuited to the CAS role, the result is almost no CAS for the 2ID in the initial days and perhaps weeks of the conflict.[25]

Forward Basing. Another MTW tenet to emerge from the Gulf War is the vital role of forward-based troops and equipment in US military response time. Forward basing allowed rapidly moving troops from US Army Europe to Southwest Asia and using pre-positioned supplies and equipment from Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. Both of these advantages enabled the United States to place far more combat capability on the ground in Southwest Asia than would otherwise have been possible. The successful use of forward-based troops, equipment and supplies during *Desert Storm* cemented the concept in US strategic planning.

However, forward basing is not without risk. Dangers range from the loss of basing rights to preemptive strikes by the very enemy these assets are designed to deter. Forward-based forces must be placed so that they are able to respond quickly in

an MTW, but not vulnerable to a preemptive strike. Unfortunately, 2ID violates this fundamental forward-basing tenet, placing its units within range of North Korean 130mm and 170mm guns.

In this case, while basing 2ID seemingly represents the ultimate in reaction capability, it would actually produce in heavy initial losses for these troops in an MTW. This setback would have political as well as military dimensions; the public measures victory or defeat in any MTW's initial

Normal US military tours of duty range from two to three years, and some military experts feel that even this time interval is inadequate to develop long-term unit cohesion. . . . In Korea, positional turnover — the turnover in terms of assigned responsibilities — approaches 125 percent annually. . . . Ironically, the annual turnover of 43 percent among Japan-based personnel in 1950 was considered a "high" rate.

stage by the number of casualties suffered. The 2ID's proximity to the North Korean border, coupled with its static defensive arrangement and the NKPA's knowledge of 2ID battle positions combine to virtually guarantee heavy US casualties in the first hours of such a conflict. It is perhaps the greatest irony that US Japan-based units in 1950 were far more appropriately placed to respond to a Korean MTW than are present day formations.[26] In short, forward basing that was effective in *Desert Storm* can be significantly less advantageous when inappropriately applied in other MTW scenarios.

Information Warfare. Winning the information war is viewed by the US military as key to success on future battlefields.[27] A significant portion of this new conventional wisdom stems from *Desert Storm*, where US dominance of Iraqi command and control (C^2) information systems effectively paralyzed the enemy. This information dominance depends on two key ideas: degrading or eliminating the enemy's C^2 capability, and developing perfect or near-perfect information regarding the enemy's physical location and relative combat power. Unfortunately, neither of these factors will play an important, much less vital, role in a North Korean scenario.

Information warfare assumes that any future adversary will use many of the modem high-tech means of communication seen during the Gulf War. US dominance in high-tech C^2 (and the ability to interdict enemy C^2 capabilities) will then act to paralyze the enemy.[28] Unfortunately, the NKPA relies primarily on simple, low-tech forms of C^2, including antiquated field telephones (land lines) and bicycle or motorcycle couriers. In other words, very few of the forms of communication targeted by US information warfare doctrine exist to be interrupted. Secondly, US information warfare assumes that the enemy will attempt near real-time C^2 of forces moving into South Korea. Unfortunately, the scenario faced by the North Koreans is one that they have faced and planned for since the end of the Korean War. The planning for this simple, one-dimensional scenario has been in place for nearly 45 years. Thus, it is safe to say that the communications that information warfare is designed to interdict were passed years, even decades ago. Under these conditions, the current US emphasis upon information warfare in the C^2 realm will play a limited or nonexistent role in the opening stages of a Korean MTW.

The second tenet of information warfare, the pursuit of perfect intelligence, also runs into difficulty in the Korean scenario. In *Desert Storm*, the ability to develop high-fidelity information regarding the enemy strength and dispositions was instrumental in destroying huge amounts of Iraqi equipment with limited US losses. This tenet of information warfare strategy implies that US targeting and delivery capabilities will lead to the enemy's defeat with little or no loss of American lives.

Unfortunately, this concept overlooks an important component in a Korean MTW by assuming that once the necessary information is derived, the capability will exist to act effectively upon the information. This is generally not the case in Korea. The North Koreans have spent the decades since the 1953 cease-fire digging in their combat assets to an extent not seen in world history (except in Switzerland perhaps). Much of North Korea's heavy artillery and most of its troops and equipment are not only dug in, but revetted in mountain caves as well.[29] Again, the ability to determine the exact location of the enemy is only useful if one retains the ability to act effectively on the information. US intelligence capability can almost certainly point to the location of every cave-reveted North Korean heavy artillery battery that can range the 2ID. Unfortunately, no weapon in the US conventional inventory can effectively attack these positions.[30]

A critical component in any military calculus is the ability to field a military force with the capable of defeating the appropriate threat. The US military has determined that the threat will hopefully take the form of a second *Desert Storm* enemy and has tailored its training accordingly. The primary components that make up the Army's training system are the Combat Training Centers and the Army Battle Lab System.

Training and Doctrine Development. The three Combat Training Centers (CTCs) represent the heart of the Army's current battle training system. They in-

clude the Combat Maneuver Training Center (CMTC) in Hohenfels, Germany, the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) in Fort Polk, Louisiana, and the National Training Center (NTC) in Fort Irwin, California. These three training centers employ state-of-the-art instrumented ranges and MILES equipment to provide maneuver units the most realistic training ever seen short of actual combat.

Unfortunately, while these CTCs are perfectly tailored for combat in many cases, they are not focused on the Korean scenario. One of the many reasons stands out above the rest—lack of appropriate mountainous terrain. There is essentially no mountainous terrain in any of the three CTCs. Ironically, the only exception, the Tiefort Range at the National Training Center, is off limits for training.[31] This lack of effective terrain is a mundane but crucial part of the problem; as T.R. Fehrenbach noted, "The NKPA ran through the valleys stolidly, and bounded up the ridges like rabbits; they had been doing it all their lives . . . again and again, officers were simply not able to organize attacks against the enfilading hills to clear the way."[32]

Further, although the CMTC possesses extensive quantities of rugged terrain (although the greatest elevation differential is approximately 200 meters), little attention is paid to moving through and fighting over this terrain. Instead, maneuver is conducted almost exclusively in the limited clear areas that filter through the terrain.[33] The inherent assumption is that no enemy would eschew the open terrain in favor of the hills. This lack of interest in mountain warfare clearly manifests itself in the composition of 2ID forces; with two light infantry battalions, less than 40 percent of 2ID is capable of fighting in mountainous terrain. By way of comparison, over 80 percent of the NKPA is composed of light infantry.[34] The general inapplicability of the CTCs to the Korean environment largely nullifies their contribution to US training for the MTW most likely to face US ground forces.

The Army Battle Lab System is the central component in the Army's attempt to determine the future of modem warfare.[35] This collection of laboratories has been charged with divining the future nature of combat and developing and implementing appropriate doctrine. As a key facet in this development and implementation process, distributed, interactive and virtual simulations help to forecast and prepare for future conflict to a degree never before envisioned.

Unfortunately, these laboratories suffer from a lack of focus on specific MTW characteristics that largely prevent them from providing directed innovations that might enhance the performance of units such as the 2ID in a specific contingency. As an example, the Dismounted Battle Lab at the home of the infantry, Fort Benning, Georgia, focuses on night fighting, target acquisition, enhanced lethality and improved survivability.[36] Unfortunately, there is no direct, application-oriented link between these focuses and potential MTW environments like Korea. Thus, while the attempt to determine the future of warfare is vital, an approach that focuses outwardly—on likely adversaries and likely operating environments—is also essential.

The rationality issue very much open to question. Military planning based on a belief in rational-actor theory represents an acceptable way of doing business only when one's opponent is clearly rational, and the North Korean government largely fails this test.

Cohesion. Unit cohesion represents a vital aspect of any army's capability to perform effectively in combat. Cohesion most often directly reflects the amount of time that a unit works and trains together before entering combat. US military leaders recognized this vital component in their decision to freeze all personnel in place for the six months leading up to the ground attack during the Gulf War.[37] General Norman Schwartzkopf also understood this requirement, as shown when he rapidly dismantled his staff's plan for rotating individuals in time periods as short as six months.[38] Additionally, the disastrous personnel rotation policies during Vietnam remain in the Army's collective memory.

Given this frame of reference, it is interesting to note that nowhere in the US Army today are rotation times shorter than in Korea. Normal US military tours of duty range from two to three years, and some military experts feel that even this time interval is inadequate to develop long-term unit cohesion.[39] Current policy requires that virtually all personnel rotate out of Korea after 12 months.[40] Worse, positional turnover—the turnover in terms of assigned responsibilities—approaches 125 percent annually.[41] In contrast, US personnel serving in the US Far East Command in 1950 served between one and three years. Those US personnel accompanied on their tours of duty were assigned for three years, and though exact data is lacking, personnel stationed in Japan during this time noted that many officers and senior noncommissioned officers opted for the longer stay.[42] Ironically, one source notes that annual turnover among Japan-based personnel in 1950 was 43 percent—a "high" rate the author blames for the unit's poor showing in the first days of the Korean conflict.[43] Given that unit cohesion is largely a function of personnel working together over time, the much-maligned divisions stationed in

Japan in 1950 arguably retained greater cohesion than 2ID does almost 50 years later.

While the US military's failure to orient its efforts on the most likely MTW is lamentable as well as potentially disastrous, it need not be a permanent condition. The US military's ability to adapt to a rapidly changing environment is well established. The well-directed emphasis on realistic training and modem equipment has produced an unrivaled military capability. If these facilities are provided proper direction, the existence of the Army's Battle Lab system can provide an unparalleled test bed developing effective tactics and technologies. These factors, coupled with the continuing efforts to avoid a "hollow" Army, mean that the current disconnect is eminently fixable.

Potential fixes particular to the Korean MTW are also close at hand. Foremost among these is the much needed relocation of 2ID to a location south of Seoul. Surprisingly, the primary reason why this has not been done already is financial rather than political. Suggestions to effect this move in the early 1980s ran aground over who would foot the massive costs.[44] Were this fix implemented, many problems associated with 2ID's vulnerability would be at least temporarily averted. Other potential solutions include a revision of US CAS planning, at least to the extent that USFK planners recognize that CAS will not save 2ID, freeing planners to examine other options. In short, a variety of available fixes can provide USFK effective direction in its planning for the Korean MTW.

Proper direction will indeed be vital. The current orientation on the "preferred-case" MTW has produced a military establishment that displays little interest in a Korean scenario, which eschews many of the technologies and concepts that make a *Desert Storm II* so attractive. In short, while the US military has changed considerably since the Korean War, without relevant, directed preparation for a Korean MTW, a repeat of July 1950 is not only possible but highly probable, should North Korea attempt to unite the peninsula by force. ***MR***

NOTES

1. Robert P. Haffa Jr., *Rational Methods and Prudent Choices: Planning U.S. Forces* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1988), 41-44.
2. Department of Defense, *A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement*, DOD Public Affairs, February 1995, 9. Notably, this document describes force "sufficient to help defeat aggression in two nearly simultaneous major regional conflicts." It does not say that the US will win both MTWs simultaneously, only that it will fight them.
3. DOD, Secretary Perry Address to the Mid-Winter Conference of the American Legion, DOD Public Affairs News Release, 27 February 1995. Perry noted that 'threats — call for a force that can fight and win two major regional conflicts nearly simultaneously."
4. Remarks by Colin Powell, 21 February 1995, Kennedy Center.
5. Interview with Richard Fieldhouse, Defense LA, Senator Levin, 14 March 1995. Fieldhouse described testimony by senior military officials to the effect dig the *Desert Storm* casualty toll represented the now benchmark for future conflicts. He noted that he found this benchmark wholly unrealistic.
6. Barbara Opall, "South Korea Tries New Evacuation Plan," *Army Times*, 10 April 1995, 16.
7. Ibid.
8. Defense Intelligence Agency, *North Korea: The Foundations for Military Strength*, Washington D.C., (Unclassified) October 1991, 30.
9. The 2d Infantry Division is a two-brigade division, consisting of six (two light infantry, two mechanized infantry, and two armor) battalions rather than the normal 10.
10. US Army Korea Liaison Office, The Pentagon, Washington, D.C., 27 February 1995.
11. Sources include, Defense Intelligence Agency, *North Korea: The Foundations for Military Strength*, Washington D.C., (Unclassified) October 1991, 42; Brassey's, *The Military Balance, 1993-1994*, International Institute of Strategic Studies, London, 1993, 44-145; Frank Chadwick, *The Gulf War Fact Book*, GDW, 1991, 68-69 and Frank Chadwick, *The Desert Storm Fact Book*, Bloomington IL, GDW, 1990, 50-51.
12. This deployment takes into account the distribution of tactical reserves, which will also be symmetric in its approach. The requirement to symmetrically cover three avenues of approach rules out the retention of an operational reserve under US tactical doctrine.
13. Gregory Pickell, "The Defeat of Task Force Smith, 20 October 1993," Unpublished manuscript.
14. Ibid.
15. DIA, *North Korea. Foundations for Military Strength*, 63.
16. See "The Anti-Armor Problem; a Case Study in Doctrinal Focus and Technology Acquisition," Unpublished manuscript; and DOD, "Tank versus TOW Engagement Ranges," Graphic.
17. DOD, "U.S. Army Weapon Systems," United States Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 1994, 183.
18. Jerome V. Martin, *Victory from Above: Airpower Theory and the Conduct of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm*, Maxwell AFB, AL, Air University Press, 6.
19. Roy E. Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu*, Office of the Chief of Military History, Washington, D.C., 1961, 51.
20. Ibid.
21. Interview with COL Bratton, Chief of Plans, US Army Korea, 14 March 1995. Bratton noted that the 2ID was "like any other US division" in its CAS requirements, and that US Air Force planning at all levels in theater supported this requirement.
22. Interview with Dr. Edward Luttwak, 16 March 1995. Luttwak noted that the Korean threat environment made the employment of expensive, high technology aircraft prohibitive.
23. US Army Field Manual (FM) 100-5, *Operations*, 1993.
24. Interview with MAJ Paul Buhl, US Army Operations Concepts and Evaluation Office, 16 March 1995.
25. "Air Forces of the World 88/89," Charles Miller, ed., *Interavia*, 450-455.
26. In July 1950 four US infantry divisions were stationed in Japan; the 7th, the 24th, the 25th and the 1st Cavalry. The only US military personnel at risk in the opening days of the Korean conflict were advisors attached to the Korean Military Advisory Group (KMAG). "Lessons for Today in Desperate Stand 42 Years Ago," *Army*, February 1992, 9.
27. Office of the Secretary of the Army, "The Army Enterprise Strategy: The Vision," Washington, D.C., 20 July 1993. Introductory remarks by Army Chief of Staff GEN Gordon R. Sullivan.
28. Ibid., 26.
29. *North Korea: The Foundations for Military Strength*, 41.
30. Bratton interview, 14 March 1995. Bratton noted that, "Current conventional means would be largely ineffective in destroying these sites, although unconventional solutions may provide methods of neutralizing this threat."
31. Defense Mapping Agency, 1085th Map Depot, Annapolis, MD.
32. T.R. Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War, A Study in Unpreparedness*, New York: Bantam Books, 1963, 134-135.
33. "The Defeat of Task Force Smith," 9.
34. *North Korea: The Foundations for Military Strength*, 4l.
35. Army Battle Labs, US Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Pamphlet, May 1994. Introductory remarks by LTG Frederick Franks, Commander, TRADOC.
36. Ibid., 15.
37. Buhl Interview, 16 March 1995. Buhl participated in the detailed US operational concept planning for the Desert Storm MTW in 1990-1991.
38. GEN H. Norman Schwartzkof, *It Doesn't Take a Hero* (New York: Bantam Books, 1992), 360-361.
39. Dr. Steven L. Canby, Remarks during interview on 4 March 1995. Canby believes that effective combat units must often train together for three to five years before achieving true cohesion.
40. Interview with LTC Melville, US Forces Korea Liaison Office, The Pentagon, Washington, D.C. Melville noted that some personnel extended their tours or brought their families to Korea at their own expense. He noted that annual personnel turn over ranged from 90-95 percent annually.
41. Buhl interview on 16 March 1995. Buhl was assigned to Korea for four years — none of them sequential.
42. Interview with COL Carl Bernard, US Army (Ret) and MG Michael Lynch US Army (Ret) on 13 March 1995.
43. "Lessons for Today in Desperate Stand 42 Years Ago," *Army*, February 1992, 10.
44. Buhl interview.

Major Gregory Pickell is serving as a writer for the Director's Staff Group, Army National Guard Readiness Center, Alexandria, Virginia. He received a B.S. from the United States Military Academy and an M.A. from Georgetown University. He has served in a variety of command and staff positions in the Continental United States and Germany, including S2, 404th Civil Affairs Battalion, Fort Dix, New Jersey; PSYOP officer, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 11th Special Forces Group, Fort Meade, Maryland; and plans and training officer, 317th Rear Area Operations Center, III Corps Support Command, V Corps, Darmstadt, Germany.